

# Mississippi Arts Commission – Whole Schools Initiative

## Program Guidelines – Fiscal Year 2015

Next application deadline: Monday, March 3, 2014

Please note: This program has been changed from a grant to a direct service program. The details are listed below in the “Services Provided by MAC” section.

Applications and support materials must be submitted through postal mail and post-marked by the due date, or delivered by hand to MAC’s office by the due date. Faxed or emailed applications will not be accepted.

Please submit applications no earlier than 30 days prior to the March 3 deadline. Applications received prior to this date will be returned.

If you would like feedback on your application in advance, please send a draft application through e-mail to the WSI Director by Monday, February 3, 2014. You will receive a response and comments within (10) ten business days of receipt of the application.

**Note on new required information:** All organizations applying to MAC (including schools) must provide their Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS) number on the application. Go to Dun & Bradstreet to apply for a number or check to see if your organization has a number. [Go here for more information on DUNS numbers.](#)

### Whole Schools Initiative - Introduction

*The Mississippi Arts Commission (MAC) believes that every child deserves to be taught in and through the arts, thus nurturing the imagination and creatively impacting lifelong learning.*

For over 20 years, MAC has provided an arts integrated conceptual approach to re-designing school environments through the Whole Schools Initiative (WSI). For over 15 years, WSI has provided professional learning for teachers, administrators, parents and teaching artists, through summer institutes and retreats. The content of the workshops are co-created with the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) and uses the Mississippi Visual and Performing Arts Frameworks and the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

The goals of the Whole Schools Initiative are:

1. To improve student academic achievement through the integration of the arts into the core curriculum.
2. To enrich the lives of students by increasing their skills and knowledge in all arts disciplines.
3. To assist the professional and personal growth of teachers and administrators through the arts.
4. To use the arts to increase parental and community involvement in schools.
5. To build a sustainable system for supporting arts integration and arts infusion in schools.

Schools interested in joining WSI are required to complete a year in the Arts in the Classroom (AIC) initiative prior to applying for WSI. For more detailed information on arts integration and MAC's commitment to this method of school reform, please visit the [WSI website](#).

WSI is a six year commitment between the school and MAC. Participating schools apply through an annual process. MAC will invest up to \$5,000 worth of services to participating schools which may include:

- On-site professional development workshops presented by teaching artists, arts specialists and teachers that explore the arts disciplines and connections to the school's academic goals and state standards.
- Professional development for staff (beginning and intermediate levels) through the Whole Schools Initiative Summer Institute (July 14-17 in Meridian, MS).
- "The Definition of Arts Integration," an on-site professional development workshop conducted by the WSI Director that deepens the understanding of the entire staff to the strategy arts integration.
- On-site arts integrated lessons modeled in classrooms by advanced teachers.
- An opportunity to visit WSI Model arts-integrated schools in Mississippi.
- Supplies that support teachers' exploration of new arts integrated strategies.
- An advisor from a WSI school to provide technical assistance and mentor the staff.
- Professional development for staff through the WSI Retreats

During the spring of 2014, MAC will collaborate with the school to create a professional development plan that includes a list of goals and services for each applicant that identifies the source of income (either MAC or the school/school district based off the application) for each expense during the 2014-15 school year. The document will need to be reviewed and signed by the principal and school district fiscal officer and returned to MAC by the spring deadline (exact date to be determined).

Services awarded to schools applying on the March 3, 2014 deadline will be available for the 2014-15 school year (see "Important Dates" section at the end of the guidelines).

### **Eligibility Requirement**

Schools may apply if they are a Mississippi public school or a school that has been incorporated in Mississippi as a non-profit organization with IRS 501(c) 3 status in place.

All final reports for current MAC grants (including supplemental materials) must be turned in and complete from the previous fiscal year before services for the upcoming fiscal year will be awarded.

### **A Menu of Services MAC may provide through WSI\***

- Collaboration with the school to create a professional development plan that identifies the source of income and a plan for professional development during the 2014-15 school year
- Sponsor an agreed number of the school's staff to attend the WSI Summer Institute (preferably 10-15% of the staff including the principal) and WSI Retreats.

- Sponsor teaching artists or consultants to lead workshop(s) at the school that connect to the school's goals.
- Support travel costs (sleeping rooms) for staff to attend off-site professional development if the school is unable to cover the costs and if it is within the award amount.
- Assign an advisor from a WSI school for 3-5 visits (depending on the needs of the school).
- Lead "The Definition of Arts Integration," an on-site professional development workshop conducted by the WSI Director that deepens the understanding of the entire staff to the strategy arts integration.
- Arrange and sponsor model arts integrated lessons to be demonstrated in the classrooms
- Schedule and facilitate Model School site visits
- Advise the school's leadership team and staff during site visits, teleconferences, etc.

**\*Note:** WSI director will work with staff to determine which options will work best to implement at your school.

## **Expectations for Schools Participating in WSI**

### **The School will:**

- Provide a cash match for the amount of agreed upon services (value up to \$5,000) Please see the cash match section for a list of qualified sources. Contact the WSI Director if you have challenges identifying matching sources.
- Send an agreed amount of staff to attend the WSI Summer Institute (preferably 10-15% of the staff including the principal) and WSI Retreats.
- Schedule time during the school year for teaching artists and consultants to work with staff and model strategies with students.
- Schedule time after each off-site professional development workshop to share information and arts integration strategies through hands-on experiences with the rest of the staff.
- Plan and conduct at least five WSI Project Team meetings at the school during the school year.
- Submit required project documentation (including the final report) upon request.
- Participate in WSI related teleconferences and meetings.
- Identify a leadership team which includes the principal, lead teachers (from each grade level), arts specialist(s), etc. to plan the efforts and map the progress of the school in the WSI journey.
- Send an agreed amount of staff to Model School sites.
- Work with MAC to map out a schedule for professional development, set up Model School site visits, discuss progress and determine goals.
- Include MAC and WSI logos on the school's website and other pertinent print pieces

### **List of services that the School may provide:**

- Registration fees for the WSI Summer Institute and WSI Retreats
- Staff travel to the WSI Summer Institute, WSI Retreats, Model School site visits, etc.
- Presenting fees for workshops, etc.
- Art supplies (that pertain to the teacher's exploration of new strategies)
- Substitute teacher salary who are hired to relieve teachers during their professional development opportunities through the WSI program or attend Model School site visits.

## **Eligible Forms for the Cash Match**

**Note: Please work with your school district's fiscal officer (public schools only) to review the following information.**

- Title 1&2 funds (for professional development, travel, etc.)
- PTO/PTA funds (including funds from fundraisers, donations, or other income streams)
- School fundraisers (Note: Please contact school district business manager to review rules for school fundraisers in advance.)
- The percentage of the co-project directors' salary that will be dedicated to the WSI project
- School or district funds (to support purchase of supplies, contracting professional development, or reimbursing travel)
- Contributions from individuals or local businesses

## **Review Criteria**

WSI applications will be reviewed using the following criteria:

### **1. Improving Academic Achievement (0- 25 points)**

The applicant should provide:

- an internal in-service professional development schedule that includes each WSI workshop and time set aside to disseminate information after the WSI summer institute and WSI retreats
- an existing planning schedule or system for teachers to plan with art specialists on a regular basis
- a description of their school's greatest needs in generating academic improvement and how the services from MAC will be incorporated into their plans

### **2. Increasing Students' Skills in and Knowledge of All Arts Disciplines (0- 10 points)**

The applicant provides:

- A proposed schedule of visual and performing arts classes that will lead to an increase in student knowledge.

### **3. Professional Growth for Teachers and Administrators (0- 15 points)**

The applicant describes:

- a realistic plan to send staff members to WSI professional development opportunities and a WSI Model School site visit

### **4. Increase in Parental and Community Involvement (0- 25 points)**

The applicant describes:

- Their relationship with the school's PTO/PTA
- Parental involvement at the school

- How they inform parents and community members about WSI and arts integration
- Community involvement at the school (including local cultural institutions)

## **5. Building a Sustainable System for Arts-Integrated Learning (0-15 points)**

The applicant demonstrates:

- At least one classroom teacher and one other teacher to be the Project Directors
- Representation from a diverse group of staff members on the Leadership Committee
- A financial commitment from the school that matches the maximum value of services offered by MAC
- A system to disseminate information back to the rest of the staff after an off-site professional development opportunity.
- An organizational chart that demonstrates a commitment from the staff and shows an even distribution of responsibilities.
- District-level support both financially and administratively.

## **6. Quality of Application (0-10 points)**

The applicant includes the following complete information:

- Whole Schools Initiative application form
- All narrative questions answered
- Other required items (see list below)

### **Steps to Applying**

1. Read through the guidelines and review the application with your school team.
2. Prior to beginning work on the application, contact the WSI Director (contact information below) to discuss your school's interest in continuing in the program for the upcoming school year.
3. Pull together data, fill out the application and collect support materials (see list below).
4. Submit one original and one copy of the application and one copy of the support materials (in the order listed below) to MAC on or before the deadline date. Note: Do not staple or bind your application.
5. Once MAC receives your application and support materials, an e-mail notification will be sent to the primary project director. Consult the "Important Dates" section below for the review and approval schedule for the program.

### **Required Items for WSI Application Package**

- WSI Application Form
- Narrative (three page maximum) in which you address the questions listed on the application form
- WSI Project Team Organizational Chart
- Personal statement from the principal describing their desire and purpose for their school participating in WSI
- A copy of your school's current planning schedule (highlighting time with teachers & art specialists, if applicable)

- Calendar of school events and regularly scheduled meetings for the 2014-15 school year. Include items such as PTA/PTO meetings, faculty meetings, professional learning committee meetings, and other school-wide events.
- Letter of support from the school's superintendent that describes the support (both administrative and financial) to the school's involvement with WSI
- Letter of support from the school's PTO or PTA that describes the structure of the meetings, involvement of the parents at the school as it pertains to the arts and other annual school events
- A general overview of the school schedule containing each grade level's visual and performing art classes. (i.e. days of the week each student receives instruction in an art discipline from an art specialist)

## **Important Dates**

**February 3, 2014:** Whole Schools Initiative application draft deadline (should be sent by email to the WSI Director)

**March 3, 2014:** Whole Schools Initiative application deadline

**April 2014:** Review of applications in-house by MAC staff

**May 2014:** Professional development plans along with budget information sent to each school for confirmation. Plans are signed by the principal and school district fiscal officer and sent back to MAC at a date to be determined

**June 2014:** MAC Board meets and makes final funding decisions on all applications

**July 1, 2014:** Applicants are notified whether they are accepted into the program or not.

**July 14-18, 2014:** 2014 WSI Summer Institute in Meridian

For additional questions about the Whole Schools Initiative, please contact Jodie Engle, Whole Schools Initiative Director at (601) 359-6040 or [jengle@arts.ms.gov](mailto:jengle@arts.ms.gov).

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. Who should the Co-Project Directors be?**

A set of teachers who are looked upon by the staff as leaders. At least one of the directors **MUST** be a classroom teacher. (Note: Please assign administrators, gifted teachers, librarians, etc. to the arts leadership committee and not as a co-project director.)

### **2. Why do you need the Co-Project Directors' personal contact information?**

During school breaks (especially the summer) it is important to have additional contact information in case there are questions or changes in upcoming events. This information will not be shared with any outside parties.

### **3. Who is the Authorizing Official?**

This person should be the person who is designated to sign contracts on behalf of the school. Public schools may list their principal or superintendent and private schools should list the school principal or other appropriate appointee.

4. **Who are considered special needs “inclusion” students?**

Any student identified as having a disability who receive specialized instruction within a general classroom environment.

5. **Who are considered special needs “self-contained” students?**

Any student identified as having a disability who receives specialized instruction within a classroom specifically designed for their needs.

6. **What is considered the Average Daily Attendance?**

% of the average daily count of students in attendance in an entire school year. Do not include tardiness.

7. **Who should we plan to send to the WSI Summer Institute and Retreats?**

The project director, principal, lead teachers from each grade level, curriculum coordinator and the art specialist(s) is an ideal group of attendees. Send a variety of new and returning staff members. Except for the project directors and administrators, each even should bring together a different team in order to spread the opportunities throughout the staff.

8. **Who should be on the WSI Project Team and how should it be organized?** The committee should be comprised of administrator(s), project directors, arts specialist(s), lead teachers and perhaps a parent. Be sure that each person on the committee has a role and responsibility. This includes the project directors and administrators.

9. **How do we create an organizational chart for the WSI Project Team?**

See the sample organization chart for an example of the roles to be assigned. The names of the roles, quantity of positions and structure will vary for each school. When submitting the organizational chart, please be sure to list the name and role of each person involved with the committee.

10. **What is the format for the narrative questions?**

Answer the questions in a narrative up to three pages. It should be formatted using a minimum 12 point font size and one inch margins on all sides of the page. It should be written by a project team that includes both administrators and the co-project directors.